

## THE WILSON BULLETIN.

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A Quarterly Magazine Devoted to the Study of Living Birds.  
Official Organ of the Wilson Ornithological Club.

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Edited by LYNDS JONES.

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### SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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Subscriptions may be sent to Lynds Jones, Oberlin, Ohio, or to Mr. Frank L. Burns, Berwyn, Penn., or to Mr. John W. Daniel, Jr., 3146 Q street, N.W., Washington, D. C.

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### EDITORIAL.

We come to the close of another year, the fifteenth since our organization, the first since our reorganization as The Wilson Ornithological Club, with a largely increased membership, with a firmer grasp upon the future, and with greater confidence in the value of field work such as we seek to do. We look out upon a twelve-month of larger attainment than any past, with the expectation of helping many into a better knowledge and a keener appreciation of the birds about them—into a life fuller of the joy of living. We believe that it is worth anybody's while to study birds intensively while they are living and striving; to get among them at considerable inconvenience and expense, if necessary, in order to imbibe something of their contentment and happiness. It is worth while to watch every bird keenly, especially the winter birds. Let no opportunity pass to learn what they are doing and how they do it. It is better to regard them as birds, not trying to see in them human characteristics and motives. Let them be birds. It is only after the accumulation of a great mass of facts that we may hope to know why they act as they do, if we are ever to know that exactly. Formulate no theory, for if you do it is pretty certain that your facts will bend to the theory. It is only the fully open-minded who really advance knowledge.

Again we make the earnest plea not to let your bird studies lapse with the appearance of cold weather, but rather increase your activities. Make a determined effort to bring some bird to your lunch counter this winter, and give him some of your time while he is profiting by your bounty. If possible keep a record of the species which visit the lunch counter. It may be possible for you to determine the amount of food eaten by one bird in a day. That is an important point. Note how the different species act toward each other, as well as the individuals of a species. Does the law of might govern them? Remember that winter is the best time in which to make an enumeration of the birds of your region. At least it is possible to keep a record of the number of individuals of each species recorded. You will be surprised at the number of species which may be found during the winter months in almost any locality. The writer recorded no less than 40 species between the first day of January, 1903, and the twenty-sixth day of February, and that is not unusual. Winter field study pays in results, and pays in health.

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The output of state and local catalogues and lists of birds for 1903 has seldom, if ever, been equalled, omitting mention of the lists of birds in foreign countries and the islands of the sea. It is especially gratifying that so many of the states of the union are becoming supplied with catalogues of the birds which have been found within their borders. These catalogues furnish a basis for work for those who are beginning the study of birds, and they also furnish an excellent basis for future comparisons of bird life when advancing civilization, with its inevitable changes, has wrought revolutions in the habits of very many species. The study of the adaptations of the birds to these changed conditions will be fascinating in the extreme. During the year Wisconsin has been added to the list of states which have catalogued their birds, by the appearance of Kumlien's and Hollister's Catalogue, and Kansas and Ohio have been brought down to date ornithologically by the appearance of Snow's Revised Catalogue of the Birds of Kansas, and the writer's Revised Catalogue of the Birds of Ohio. We understand that Mr. H. C. Oberholser is preparing a catalogue of the birds of Texas. Local lists of birds, county and regional lists, have been numerous, both as separate papers and articles in the magazines. The appearance of Dawson's Birds of Ohio adds a stimulus to the popular side of bird study. It is the most notable book of its kind for the year, if not for several years. The interest which it has already aroused in those who have seen advance copies presages a heavy sale within and without the state. Outside of the United States, but still within our avi fauna, Part II of Macoun's Catalogue of Canadian Birds is a notable contribution to ornithology. We believe thoroughly in

these more or less local lists, because it is by these that we shall ultimately come to be certain of the true range of our birds. It is usually true, also, that these catalogues contain something of value relating to the life history of at least some of the birds enumerated. Complete life histories of any of our birds have yet to be written. The nearest approach to a complete life history of any bird is Mr. Frank L. Burns on the Flicker, published as Bulletin No. 31, of the Wilson Bulletin series.

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While we are in entire sympathy with the efforts put forth to protect our native birds, and rejoice to note the effective ways adopted to bring about better protection, we have also shared the feeling that there was too little respect of persons in the effort of protecting the birds. We feel that too heavy restrictions have been laid upon those who find it necessary to do strictly scientific collecting for legitimate purposes. We still believe that some restriction should be placed upon even the scientific collector, but the "Model Law" should not be made practically prohibitive. It is a pleasure, therefore, to state that at the last meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union the bonding clause of the "Model Law" was so modified that strictly scientific collecting will no longer be so greatly hampered. It behooves those who are benefited by this needed change not to abuse the privilege.

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#### ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 1904.

The following persons have been elected to fill the offices of the Club for 1904:

President—Lynds Jones, Oberlin, Ohio.

Vice President—W. L. Dawson, Columbus, Ohio.

Secretary—John W. Daniel, Jr., 3146 Q St., Washington, D. C.

Treasurer—Frank Burns, Berwyn, Pa.

Executive Council—H. C. Oberholser, Washington, D. C.

John H. Sage, Portland, Conn.

Benj. T. Gault, Glen Ellyn, Ill.

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#### ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS.

For Active membership, O. H. Pease, Hope, Kansas.

H. H. Skinner, Oberlin, Ohio.

For Associate membership, N. C. Gilbert, 615 Lake street, Madison, Wis.